
Apostrophe to Liberty

by Eugene V. Debs

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It does not matter that the Creator has sown with stars the fields of ether and decked the earth with countless beauties for man's enjoyment. It does not matter that air and ocean teem with the wonders of innumerable forms of life to challenge man's admiration and investigation. It does not matter that nature spreads forth all her scenes of beauty and gladness and pours forth the melodics of her myriad-tongued voices for man's [---cetation]. If liberty is ostracized and exiled, man is a slave, and the world rolls in space and whirls around the sun a gilded prison, a domed dungeon, and though painted in all the enchanting hues that infinite art could command, it must stand forth a blotch amidst the shining spheres of the sidereal heavens, and those who cull from their vocabularies of nations, living or dead, their flashing phrases with which to apostrophize Liberty, are engaged in perpetuating the most stupendous delusion the ages have known. Strike down liberty, no matter by what subtle and infernal art the deed is done, the spinal cord of humanity is sundered and the world is paralyzed by the indescribable crime.

Strike the fetters from the slave, give him liberty, and he becomes an inhabitant of a new world. He looks abroad and beholds life and joy in all things around him. His soul expands beyond all boundaries. Emancipated by the Genius of Liberty, he aspires a communion with all that is noble and beautiful and feels himself allied to all the higher order of intelligences, and walks forth redeemed from animalism, ignorance, and superstition, a new being, throbbing with glorious life.

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